






New U.S. National Application  
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Claim 3, line 1, delete "or 2".

Claim 7, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1-6" and insert "--claim 1--".

Please add the following new claims:

9. An apparatus as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that it also comprises a milling unit (13, 29; 30).
10.  An apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the work-table comprises at least one backing (28a, 28b) and each workpiece (2, 3) is clamped to the backing by means of a separate clamping means (21, 22), characterized in that the backing consists of at least two parts (28a, 28b) which are arranged for movement relative to one another and in that at least one workpiece (2, 3) is clamped in the same position between its clamping means (21, 22) and its associated backing part during milling and friction stir welding operations or milling and laser welding operations.
11.   An apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the work-table comprises at least one backing (28a, 28b) and each workpiece (2, 3) is clamped to the backing by means of a separate clamping means (21, 22), characterized in that the backing consists of at least two parts (28a, 28b) which are arranged for movement relative to one another and in that at least one workpiece (2, 3) is clamped in the same position between its clamping means (21, 22) and its associated backing part during milling and friction stir welding operations or milling and laser welding operations.
12.  An apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein the work-table comprises at least one backing (28a, 28b) and each workpiece (2, 3) is clamped to the backing by means of a separate clamping means (21, 22), characterized in that the backing consists of at least two parts (28a, 28b) which are arranged for movement relative to one another and in that at least one workpiece (2, 3) is clamped in the same position between its clamping means (21, 22) and its associated backing part during milling and friction stir welding operations or milling and laser welding operations.
13.  An apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the work-table comprises at least one backing (28a, 28b) and each workpiece (2, 3) is clamped to the backing by means of a separate clamping means (21, 22), characterized in

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that the backing consists of at least two parts (28a, 28b) which are arranged for movement relative to one another and in that at least one workpiece (2, 3) is clamped in the same position between its clamping means (21, 22) and its associated backing part during milling and friction stir welding operations or milling and laser welding operations.

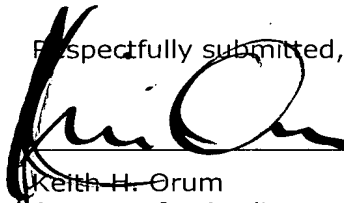
- al 14. An apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein the work-table comprises at least one backing (28a, 28b) and each workpiece (2, 3) is clamped to the backing by means of a separate clamping means (21, 22), characterized in that the backing consists of at least two parts (28a, 28b) which are arranged for movement relative to one another and in that at least one workpiece (2, 3) is clamped in the same position between its clamping means (21, 22) and its associated backing part during milling and friction stir welding operations or milling and laser welding operations.

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### REMARKS

The foregoing amendments are primarily for the purpose of eliminating multiple dependencies, and placing the claims in proper form.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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